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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/59/L.58 and Add.1)*]

59/279. Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 57/152 of 16 December 2002, 57/256 of 20 December 2002, 58/25 of 5 December 2003, 58/214 and 58/215 of 23 December 2003, 59/212 of 20 December 2004, and 59/231 and 59/233 of 22 December 2004,

Expressing sincere condolences and deep sympathy to the victims, their families, the Governments and the peoples of those States that suffered huge losses of life and socio-economic and environmental damage from the unprecedented tsunami disaster that struck the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian regions on 26 December 2004,

Commending the prompt response, support, generous contributions to and assistance of the international community, by Governments, civil society, the private sector and individuals, in the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, which reflect the spirit of international solidarity and cooperation to address the disaster,

Commending also the leading role of the affected States and the role of the United Nations in addressing the disaster, and recognizing the importance of cooperation for effective mobilization, coordination and delivery of international assistance in the emergency relief phase,

Welcoming the Declaration on Action to Strengthen Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Prevention in the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster of 26 December 2004,[1] adopted at the special meeting of leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, held in Jakarta on 6 January 2005 in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami, and the pledges made by donor countries and international financial institutions for the affected countries,

Welcoming also the launching of the Indian Ocean earthquake-tsunami 2005 flash appeal by the Secretary-General to respond to the urgent and immediate needs

[1] A/59/669, annex.

of communities severely affected by the earthquake and tsunami[2] and the outcome of the Ministerial-level Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to Tsunami-affected Communities, held in Geneva on 11 January 2005,

Welcoming further the recent announcement by the Paris Club creditors that they will not expect debt payments from affected countries that request such forebearance until the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have made a full assessment of their reconstruction and financing needs as well as specific initiatives from countries on this issue,

Welcoming the appointment by the Secretary-General of a Special Coordinator to coordinate international emergency relief operations in support of national emergency programmes of countries affected by the tsunami disaster and covered by the flash appeal,

Expressing concern over the medium- and long-term social, economic and environmental impacts of the disaster on the affected States,

Stressing the need to develop and implement risk-reduction strategies and to integrate them, where appropriate, into national development plans, in particular through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, so as to enhance the resilience of populations in disasters and reduce risks to them, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources,

Recognizing that the development of stronger institutions, mechanisms and capacities, including at the community level, that can systematically build resilience to hazards and disasters is essential to reducing the risks and the vulnerability of populations to disasters, including disaster preparedness, mitigation and early warning systems at all levels,

Recalling the need for continued commitment to assist the affected countries and their peoples, particularly the most vulnerable groups, to fully recover from the catastrophic and traumatic effects of the disaster, including in their medium- and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, and welcoming Government and international assistance measures in this regard,

Emphasizing that disaster reduction, including reducing vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

Welcoming the convening of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005, with a view to updating the guiding framework on disaster reduction for the twenty-first century,

Noting the outcome of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Mauritius from 10 to 14 January 2005,

Stressing the importance of advancing the implementation of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg

[2] Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka.

Plan of Implementation")[3] and its relevant provisions on vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management,

Emphasizing the importance of establishing a partnership, upon the request and with the leadership of the country concerned, involving donor countries and regional and international financial institutions as well as the private sector and civil society, to support the respective national rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes of the affected countries,

Emphasizing also the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of the affected States in dealing with natural disasters in all phases, including prevention, preparedness, mitigation, recovery and reconstruction, as well as in strengthening the response capacity of affected countries,

1. *Expresses its deep concern* at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact within recent years, which have resulted in a massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world, in particular in developing countries;

2. *Emphasizes* the need for the international community to maintain its focus beyond the present emergency relief, in order to sustain the political will to support the medium- and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reduction efforts led by the Governments of the affected countries at all levels;

3. *Welcomes* the effective cooperation between the affected States, relevant bodies in the United Nations system, donor countries, regional and international financial institutions and civil society in the coordination and delivery of emergency relief, and stresses the need to continue such cooperation and delivery throughout the ongoing relief operations and rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, in a manner that reduces vulnerability to future natural hazards;

4. *Encourages* the international community, particularly donor countries, international financial institutions and relevant international organizations, as well as the private sector and civil society, to deliver swiftly on their pledges and to continue to provide the necessary funds and assistance to support the rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts;

5. *Welcomes* the increasing efforts to further enhance transparency and accountability with respect to the channelling and utilization of resources;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative in order to, inter alia, sustain the political will of the international community to support medium- and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reduction efforts led by the Governments of affected countries at all levels;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to explore ways to further strengthen the rapid response capacities for immediate humanitarian relief efforts of the international community, building on the existing arrangements and ongoing initiatives, including the consideration of "standby arrangements" under the auspices of the United Nations;

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[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

8. *Invites* the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, in collaboration with other international and regional financial institutions and the United Nations, to convene members of the international community, including affected countries, to address the medium- and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of the affected countries;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the decision by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to establish regional mechanisms on disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation, encourages regional cooperation in this regard, and urges donor countries and regional and international organizations as well as other relevant institutions to provide, where appropriate, financial and technical assistance;

10. *Also recognizes* the importance of the promotion of public education, awareness and community participation in disaster prevention and preparedness, particularly at the local level, as well as the pressing need to develop and promote national and regional capacity and access to technology and knowledge in building and managing a regional early warning system and in disaster management, through national and regional efforts as well as through international cooperation and partnership;

11. *Emphasizes* the urgent need for the establishment of a regional early warning system, particularly for tsunamis, in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian regions, and notes the interest expressed by some Governments, bodies and organizations, including the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, to support the establishment of this system;

12. *Welcomes* the proposed convening of a regional ministerial meeting on regional cooperation with regard to a tsunami early warning system, to be held in Thailand on 28 January 2005;

13. *Also welcomes* the proposal of Germany to host a third international early warning conference, covering the complete range of natural hazards, with a focus on the urgent implementation of early warning systems for hydrometeorological and geological hazards on a global scale;

14. *Further welcomes* the fact that the World Conference on Disaster Reduction will discuss the issue of a global and regional tsunami early warning system as part of its agenda;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance" and to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2005.

79th plenary meeting
19 January 2005